THE FIFTH DAY.

4th March, 1921.

The Assembly met at 11-35 A. M., on Friday, the 4th March 1921.

(2) OTHER INDUSTRIES.

52. Government aid to Industries.

Mr. K. C. Mamman Mappilai B. A. (Member, Nominated) began by observing that the State should take up the main responsibility for developing the industries and the economic resources of the country. The altered angle of vision of the Government, as indicated in the opening Address of the Dewan, made him hopeful of the industrial future of the State. He then referred to the occasional conflict of opinions between the lay public and the expert employed by Government in matters industrial, and pleaded for greater deference being shown to public opinion as it represented the intelligent consciousness of the country and as it invariably contained something sound and substantial. Proceeding to consider the indigenous industrial enterprises, he pressed for private enterprise being fostered and encouraged in all possible ways calculated to develop the economic resources of the country. The people were considerably handicapped in the matter of undertaking such development for want of sufficient capital, organisation and experience; and the support of Government would therefore be of the greatest advantage to them at the present juncture. The assistance which the Government give should be such as not to take away the initiative from the people. It ought to be the aim of Government to examine whether the schemes outlined by the people were sound, practicable and realisable, and, if they were so, to bring them into practical operation by giving expert advice and financial assistance, whenever necessary. Whatever might be the proposals for the economic development of the country, they should be put into practical effect by the people of the country rather than by outsiders. Foreign capital had done a good deal in the field of industrial development, but the time had arrived when the undeveloped resources of the country should be conserved for the benefit of the people of the State, even at the risk of postponing such development. Government should not help foreign capitalists and offer them substantial concessions whenever private local enterprise was available. The Member then referred to the development of cottage and factory industries. The importance of cottage industries was obvious even in places where large scale industries prospered. In emphasising the need for the development of cottage industries, it should not be forgotten that the aim of Government should be to encourage people to start large concerns and constitute centres of industries.

In speaking of the Development departments, the Member said that the Co-operative department was lacking in efficiency on account of the present system of recruitment of its officers. The policy of Government should be to appoint qualified men with special training at the head of such technical departments, and such men should be made to understand that their interests were intimately bound up with the success of their departments.

Dealing with the indigenous banks and their difficulties by the side of more powerful organisations like the Imperial Bank of India, he urged the need for substantial assistance being rendered to the former by Government. He suggested the desirability of purchasing Government stationery and other stores through local agencies by encouraging Travancoreans to organise themselves into small companies and giving them the contract for the supply of governmental stores. Such a policy, if actively worked out, would materially conduce to the benefit of the country.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

In regard to the industrial programme of Government, the question of funds was a material factor that had to be reckoned with in the successful accomplishment of the large schemes outlined in that programme. With a view to obviate the financial difficulty which confronted not only Travancore but all modern States, the Member suggested the desirability of organising subsidised companies, as contemplated in Lord Milner's Empire Development Scheme, in which Government should take shares and the profits derived from which should be utilised for public purposes. Such companies should of course be subject to the careful supervision of Government and would be a source of profit to Government and benefit to the people. A sugar refinery might be started on some such basis. If the industry was started in South Travancore, there was the contingency of jaggery disappearing altogether in course of time on account of the growing reluctance of the people to climb palmyra trees. On the other hand, if the refinery was located in North or Central Travancore, there was less difficulty, as extensive areas could be brought under sugarcane cultivation and as there would be a never-failing supply of the raw material required for the purpose. Further, the facilities for cheap transport through backwaters and canals were greater in Central or North Travancore than in South Travancore. The paper pulp industry too could be established under the above scheme which, with the assurance of governmental supervision, would embolden the people to invest their savings. A syndicate or a company might also be established to reclaim a large area of backwater under the advice of the Director of Agriculture, and if Government would take some shares in the concern, it would be beneficial in several directions. Again, a proper system of transport might be established in the place of the existing ones which were quite irresponsible and wasteful. Government should control the entire transport system, and if it could be made a Government monopoly, much of the present public inconvenience and danger could be avoided. With the help of Government, railway construction could be made a popular industry. There should be a system of State Railways as in Mysore.

Coming to the Forest department and its policy of conservancy, the Member was of opinion that the reservation of forests in Travancore had been carried on to an undesirable extent. There were large areas in the reserves containing lands fit for cherical cultivation, and those lands might profitably be disafforested and rendered available for such cultivation. Besides, unless markets were taken near the forests or forests near the markets, the value of the forests was very little. The policy of Government should be to see that human habitations are honeycombed with forests so that markets might spring up close to the forests and the demand for timber and other forest produce might increase. The policy of the department was quite the reverse of this. The Member also criticised the recent action of the Forest department in discouraging cardamom cultivation as being opposed to the interests of forest conservancy. He submitted that cardamom cultivation should be encouraged in all possible ways and that the order prohibiting cardamom ryots from cultivating lands before the registration proceedings were complete, worked hardship and deserved to be looked into, as the ryots did not do any harm to the trees on those lands.

In conclusion, the Member spoke of the Department of Industries which, according to him, was out of touch with the instincts and aspirations of the people. The present organisation of the department could not be of much use. He expressed the hope that the department would improve and be of real help in the industrial regeneration of the land.

Dewan's reply.—You have made a valuable contribution to the proceedings of this Assembly. Let me thank you on behalf of the Government for the very thoughtful remarks you have made and the suggestions you have offered. I am sure that you do not expect me to reply at once to all your observations and suggestions. In the first place, it is impossible. In the second place, you have touched on such large questions of policy and such important matters of detail and indicated the directions in which effort is necessary that I think it will be rash for me to say anything in reply on the spur of the moment. I would only refer to one or two of the observations you have made. You referred to the conflict between the expert's opinion and

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

the people's instinct. I know there is such a thing as that. There is generally a conflict between the people's instinct and the opinion of experts, and it is to reconcile these two things that Conferences are generally held—Conferences of experts and of people interested in the matters discussed and also of people who possess practical experience of such matters. It is becoming more and more the fashion of all Governments to consult non-official opinion on important matters. I think that is the only possible way by which such reconciliation can be effected, and this Government are doing all that they can in that direction. Another observation you have made is that it is not good policy to take away the initiative from the people in the matter of starting, financing, and developing industries. I quite agree with you there and I believe that that is the policy that I have sought to lay down in my opening speech. In fact, the Government can do much more by way of developing industries and organising them by leaving the initiative of the people untouched and by giving the people such assistance as is necessary to ensure stability to their enterprises and by giving them expert advice and financial assistance as far as possible. The Government do not want to spoon-feed the people. They do want people to stand on their own legs. Whatever encouragement Government can give them will be given, as I have already said, very willingly.

V. PUBLIC WORKS.

53. Grievances of the owners of water-logged paddy fields in the Colachel pakuthi with certain suggestions for their removal, with special reference to the deepening of the Pamburi Voikal.

Mr. T.Raman Pillai (Member, Municipal Council, Colachel) represented about the sufferings of the owners of certain fields in the Colachel pakuthi which were submerged under water owing to the silting up of the bed of the Pamburi Voikal due to the high sill level of a bridge across it, and said that though on account of the submergence there were no facilities for raising of crops, Government had not only refused to grant remissions, but had imposed water cess in addition. The Member suggested the following remedial measures :—

(1) the reconstruction of the above bridge with the foundation laid on a lower level ;

(2) provision of cross bars from the bridge to the Neyyur Voikal junction and the complete clearance of the deposit of sand and silt from the Voikal ;

(3) cutting a drainage channel from south to north to the east of the Mulagumood-Colachel road to divert the water now draining into the Chathankara *Ela* through a number of culverts and causing water-logging ;

(4) cutting a drainage *Kal* quite close to the eastern and western tanks within the Chathankara *Ela*, so as to remove the water logging in that *Ela* also caused by the Pamburi Voikal running at a higher level.

The Member also pointed out the injury caused to the salt factories by the submergence of the fields and stated that, if the remedial measures suggested by him were carried out, the factories would be improved.

Dewan's reply,—The P. W. D. are investigating this question. Action will be taken after the investigation is over.

54. The urgent need for irrigational facilities for the western pakuthies of the Eraniel taluk, uncommanded by the Kodayar channels.

Mr. P. Krishna Pillai (Member, Eraniel Taluk) said that the subject had been repeatedly pressed on the attention of Government and had not received due consideration at their hands. He submitted that, in reference to their prayer that a branch channel should be cut and made available for irrigation in the western pakuthies of Eraniel taluk, Government were of opinion that further extension could not be made in the present Kodayar works, unless the existing channels were properly supplied with water. Later on, respresentations were made for the restoration of tanks that had been neglected and had fallen into disuse. As a result of those representations, Government ordered an investigation into the condition of those

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly